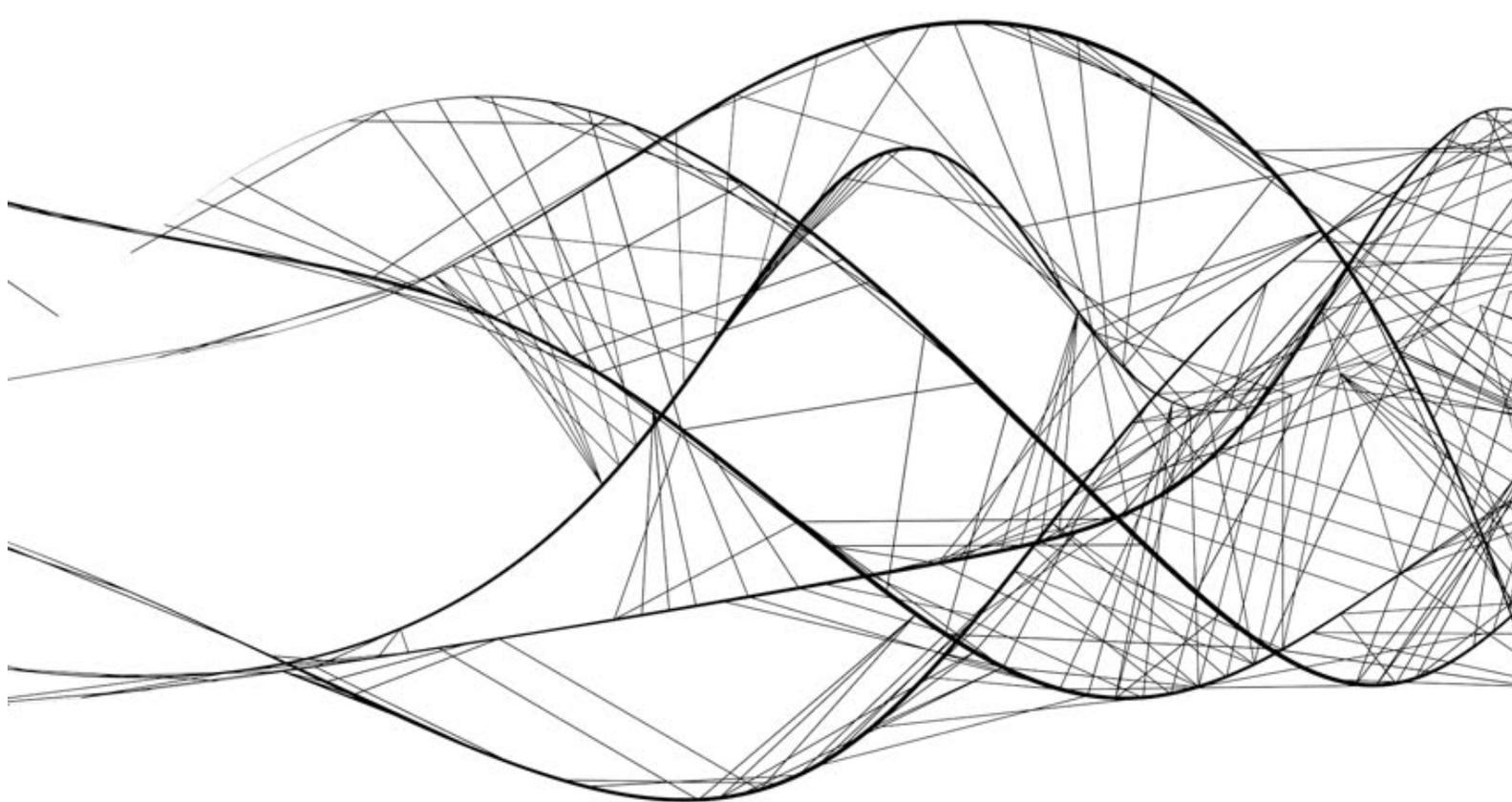


Shifting Business Development Strategy: Accelerate Recovery & Drive Growth

AE Firms are re-igniting business development efforts with an aim toward meeting client's needs and anticipating how those needs are changing in the current COVID environment. Learn what is working, what isn't working, and what to accelerate.



Throughout the COVID pandemic, AE firms' workforce priorities have been adapting to remote work-from-home strategies. These adaptations have been quite successful. The next priority for AE leaders is to ensure the firm's staying power by maintaining and growing project business. To help in that effort, our team at Greenway is sharing what we have learned in our work with many firms over the past several months. Our primary focus has been on how companies are shifting their approaches to business development in response to significant changes in many industries and industry sector's project demand. We are also providing an opportunity for firms to explore these new approaches and ideas with their teams in a series of e-Workshops on **Shifting Business Development Strategy**. We believe that assessing your business development approach during this crisis is essential and is one of your best organizational tools to help accelerate recovery and drive growth in the months ahead.

Now is the time to assess content and refine messaging. In these difficult but historically significant times, we believe it is vital to use this time of crisis as a catalyst to refine the firm's point of view about the impact of design on people and use that content to lead your approach to business development. *We think the time is now for examining the needs of your clients and owners in your practice sectors and assessing what will work best to win hearts and minds amid profound disruption.* Owners/clients

are dealing with unprecedented complexity right now, and they need help to 'de-complexify'. They long for design leadership.

A window of opportunity now exists to engage the power of your design teams; to innovate and use your discoveries to develop your points of view about the design implications of sea-changes occurring in the way people interact in all types of spaces. This work is being used as the basis of new communications messaging that resonates with your clients' changing needs due to the crisis. This is the time to demonstrate your firm's relevance and unique value.

Highlights of our research. We recently asked AE leaders across many different practice sectors and firms of various sizes —how their priorities have shifted, and how they are regaining momentum at their companies.

Despite the different circumstances facing each company, some consistent themes emerged from these conversations: First, rather than putting their foot on the brakes, firms are going all-in with new ways of serving and staying relevant to their clients. Second, some are viewing COVID-19 as an opportunity to gain traction on longstanding internal challenges at their firm. And third, client owners and users are actively preparing for a very different future.

Many indicated they are shifting gears in their approach to winning new business to better respond to the

impact of COVID-19 on their clients and practice sectors. We are also helping firms to evaluate opportunities to leverage alliances and partnerships in new ways and to pursue selective acquisitions.

There are short term tactical responses to engage with new and existing clients as well as longer term responses to re-focus the firm's message and business development strategy in service to a longer-term vision.

Actions speak louder than words by consciously demonstrating empathy and care during this crisis. Firms are building a foundation of goodwill and long-lasting emotional connections with the communities they serve.

AE firms' recent interactions with their clients, i.e., owners, developers, have predominantly been in a video-conference setting from overseeing construction activities, reviewing designs, to making presentations. These interactions are often more extensive, more relaxed, and more frequent. People seem to have a willingness to chat longer on a video call than they might have been in a meeting in their office.

AE firms are investing time with their design teams to develop their own points of view about how human behavior has changed and how best they can help clients use existing space more effectively and explore new design scenarios. They are creating assessments to help their clients identify potential impacts of the pandemic in various practice sectors. We are seeing internal design teams

engage in a variety of virtual web-based 'charrettes', panel discussions, or webinars. These idea 'storming' sessions are also extending to include external stakeholders. The subsequent outcomes of these explorations and discussions provide data and information as a basis for research and best practices that are shared with clients on a timely basis.

Many of the top performing AE firms have included research and data in their marketing and business development strategy for years. They have been successful by 'leading with research and data' to differentiate themselves from the unrelenting commoditization that has vexed many design companies. An outcome of instituting a research-based practice has been better market positioning as a 'visible expert' in their practice sectors and an expanded scope of services offered.

This shift in strategy is a key to capturing additional fees for upstream and downstream services such as facilitation, pre-and post-design, and a more expansive design phase.

In the current operating environment, owners' and users' needs are rapidly changing. We expect many adaptations in the way people interact at work, in public spaces, and at home to be permanent. Those embarking on new projects will look to the architects, designers, and engineers for leadership and for a data-based point of view about how best to adapt the built environment to changing attitudes and expectations of people.

Redefining Excellence

With the overall economy in dire straits—and individuals facing a wide range of disruptions to their careers and well-being—your firm’s financial target goals as well as your client’s financial goals may be unrealistic. We are all still learning what optimal business performance looks like during a pandemic.

While companies in many sectors continue to cut costs and to delay projects, the proposed nationwide investment in growth and infrastructure projects may signal a hint of cautious optimism. As one AE CEO said in a recent conversation, ‘We plan for the worst and strive for the best.’ In our work with firm principals and others who are responsible for new project business, the key is to collaborate to get visibility and pursue commitments for the projects that are possible, taking into account the changes and shifts in the business landscape.

Going forward, it is important to re-define what ‘great’ looks like now and to reassess your goals and strategies regularly in the coming months.

We believe no other professions are as uniquely qualified as architects, designers, and engineers to influence successful adaptation to the changes brought about by the COVID pandemic. In order to develop new business opportunities, now more than any other time, those AE firms that reassess and shift their approach to business development strategy can activate both short term tactics and

longer-term investments that result in winning more work.

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To learn more about e-Workshops for your firm on ‘Shifting Business Development Strategy’ contact [Greenway Group](#)

AE Teams e-Workshop

New ideas and approaches to business development at AE firms are emerging and can be a powerful organizational tool to help accelerate recovery and drive growth as our rapidly changing world amplifies competitive pressures.

Greenway has designed and expertly facilitated this e-Workshop to help firms adapt their new business development strategy to changing project demand.

New Demands on Business Development

- New and different business development approaches and skills driven by market dynamics
- Shifting seller/doing priorities
- Distance selling
- Sales cycle time, win rates, and forecasting
- Siloed client relationships and concentration risks

e-Workshop Format

- **Confidential single-firm experience**
- **Three hours**
- **10 person maximum**
- **Interactive and (virtual) hands-on**

Workshops are designed exclusively for AE firms with insights derived from Greenway's experts and on-going research among a wide array of AE firms and best in class companies.

What You'll Learn

- What has changed, what hasn't, and winning business amidst today's uncertainties
- Identify strategies that can spark new opportunities in your markets and improve margins
- Identify a range of ideas to enhance client engagement and leverage project data
- Arm those newer to their roles with tools for success

e-Workshop Benefits:

- ❖ **Greenway's expertise**
- ❖ **Easy access and inclusive**
- ❖ **Cost-effective/ Reduced logistical effort**
- ❖ **Practical action items**
- ❖ **Strengthen culture and get results**

Our e-Workshop clients have said:

"Greenway's one-firm e-workshop format allowed us to hold really candid discussions and generate ideas that were tailored to our firm compared to the multi-firm webinars and conferences we have attended."

- a multi-office diversified firm

"Our leadership team needed this focused and facilitated discussion to adapt our BD strategy. We appreciated the practical tips and action steps with Greenway's cut-to-the-chase examples."

- a 20-person design firm

"Just what my team needed to get our heads back in the game and re-focus on new opportunities"

- a 95-person AE firm

Contact Greenway Group to learn more and customize an e-Workshop for your team.

www.greenway.us 719-634-4770